



## TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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### CHC Partnerships with Higher Education Institutions

After researching County Historical Commission (CHC) partnerships, we found that some of the most successful collaborations are with institutions of higher learning. Community colleges, four-year universities, and technical schools provide a diverse pool of students, faculty, and staff who have skills and expertise that enable CHCs to improve preservation projects. Develop these partnerships to expand a CHC's capacity and introduce new generations to the importance of preservation.

#### Consider the following CHC partnerships documented in recent CHC Annual Reports.

**Bexar CHC** worked with Texas A&M at San Antonio in the past when placing a historical marker on University property, which honored Spanish and Mexican Land Grants. This partnership was reinforced while planning the CHC's Tricentennial Conference that celebrated the founding of the City of San Antonio 300 years ago. This event is one of several celebrations held in 2017 to celebrate San Antonio's Tricentennial.

This symposium was organized and hosted by the Bexar CHC in the new courtroom at the Bexar County Courthouse. To prepare, the county judge issued personal invitations to universities and colleges to gain support for these symposiums. CHC appointees, many of whom are professionally associated with San Antonio universities, participated in planning and in the symposium. These individuals, along with invited speakers, represented the following schools and organizations: University of New Mexico, St. Mary's University, Texas A&M at San Antonio, St. Edward's University, San Antonio Historical Association, Archives of San Juan Bautista (Coahuila, Mexico), and the Bexar CHC.

The symposium provided educational sessions, meals and refreshments, free parking, and translation services. This two-day event was paid for by the County and hugely successful with approximately 400 attendees.

**Brewster CHC** has a long-standing partnership with Sul Ross University—administration, faculty, and associated organizations. Over the years, CHC appointees have supported the University by serving on boards for the Center for Big Bend Studies and the Museum of the Big Bend, as well as, volunteering services and attending organizational events. Sul Ross has supported the CHC by providing supervision and judges for the CHC's primary educational effort, a regional history fair, which is held in collaboration with the Jr. Historian Programs sponsored by the Texas State Historical Association. Sul Ross sponsors the event and provides venue space for more than 300 middle and high school students from surrounding counties. Sul Ross also supports CHC efforts by keeping copies of CHC research, reviews of articles, and material associated with CHC presentations. Documentation is filed in the University's archives and its staff provides valuable assistance to CHC appointees.

**Cameron CHC** partnered with the University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College to provide technical education to students through a Historic Rehabilitation Program. As part of the program's curriculum, faculty and partners provide training on materials and methods associated with historic preservation. The program connects the college and its students to the community through professional practice and civic service as the students receive hands-on experiences in construction and conservation of historic structures. Passing on these building techniques to younger generations is particularly important because skilled labor of this caliber is unavailable in many areas. This program gained popularity not only for its academic value but also because it enabled participants to work on some of the county's most significant cultural and historic resources.

**Harris CHC** partnered with the San Jacinto Community College and one of its history professors to provide students with a unique community college experience associated with history. Several education sessions were conducted for the students, beginning with description of east Harris County history. The history professor asked students to prepare formal essays that could become a published blog regarding local history. Students prepared essays with help from research associated with state historical markers. In addition, the students were asked to locate and participate in restoration of historical markers during the semester.

Harris CHC presented its first session to the students at the College on history recorded locally, which focused on the Harris CHC marker repair process that has been underway for several years. During the next meeting, the class was taken to two abandoned cemeteries. The following session included a visit to the historic Jeff Davis Hospital on Halloween night, along with the College Park Cemetery. The class came away wanting to become involved in helping mark abandoned cemeteries and form an organization to support their involvement in forgotten history.

**McCulloch CHC** submitted 123 documented Swedish history items for digitization under the terms of a mini-grant agreement between the CHC and the University of North Texas (UNT). In 2016, UNT informed the McCulloch CHC that the long, technical process of digitization was complete and that the McCulloch County Swedish History Project had been incorporated into the University's digital initiative, "The Portal to Texas History." The collection includes the following: photographs, correspondence, immigration papers, church newsletters and records, official documents, published and unpublished biographical and autobiographical materials, news articles, genealogies, business records, and personal memorabilia.

As a collection, McCulloch County Swedish History Project represents a sampling of the history of the county's Swedish settlers and settlements in East Sweden, West Sweden, Melvin, and Brady. The documentation reveals how they not only adapted their Swedish culture to New World circumstances, but also had a lasting influence on the emerging character of McCulloch County. Our CHC is proud of the partnership that now exists with UNT and plans on applying soon for other grants to fund additions to the collection.

**Travis CHC** sponsors an annual History Essay at Austin Community College (ACC) for its students. The program continues to create a new awareness of county history among ACC students by requiring them to develop projects on topics related to Travis County history. Students then present their work for review by their peers and the public. The goal of this program is to develop new student interest in county history and to encourage them to share their discoveries with family and friends in the community. The CHC has been increasing its involvement and helping with the review part of the process. This change created more interaction between appointees and students, demonstrating the CHC's interest in the students and their interest in history.

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### **CHC Partnership Series provided by the CHC Outreach Program**

- Expanding CHC Partnerships  
[thc.texas.gov/expanding-chc-partnerships](http://thc.texas.gov/expanding-chc-partnerships)
- Constructive Partnerships with the THC  
[thc.texas.gov/what-it-means-have-constructive-partnership-texas-historical-commission](http://thc.texas.gov/what-it-means-have-constructive-partnership-texas-historical-commission)
- Why Partnerships with the THC are Important  
[thc.texas.gov/why-partnership-thc-important](http://thc.texas.gov/why-partnership-thc-important)
- Improving Communication with the THC  
[thc.texas.gov/improving-communication-thc](http://thc.texas.gov/improving-communication-thc)
- Building Partnerships with History-Related Organizations  
[thc.texas.gov/building-partnerships-history-related-organizations](http://thc.texas.gov/building-partnerships-history-related-organizations)
- Advantages of partnering with History-Related Organizations:  
[thc.texas.gov/advantages-partnering-history-related-organizations](http://thc.texas.gov/advantages-partnering-history-related-organizations)
- Improving of partnering with History-Related Organizations:  
<http://www.thc.texas.gov/improving-partnerships-history-related-organizations>
- Improving partnerships with Communities  
<http://www.thc.texas.gov/partnering-communities>
- Constructive Partnerships with County Officials  
<http://www.thc.texas.gov/constructive-partnerships-county-officials>
- Partnering with Higher Education Institutions  
<http://www.thc.texas.gov/partnering-higher-education-institutions>



**TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
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